

To: Kevin C. Aiston
From: Prudence Bushnell
Subject: Human Rights in Rwanda

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Date Received: 10/12/94

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George/John/Reed/Kevin -- Monique Mujawaramaria called me this morning to ask for our help in the following matter:

The former Burgermeister of the commune of Mbazi, in the prefecture of Butare, has been placed under arrest by the GOR. Antoine Sibomana is well known to Monique because this is the commune in which her sister lives (and where she placed her children). She maintains that when the massacres began, "Antoine" did everything he could to prevent them in the commune, including arresting his own brother. When events got out of control (a procureur from Kigali arrived and demanded that the papers of those arrested be handed over to him) and the massacres came to the commune, Antoine locked himself in his house. As the RPF moved in, he led the commune out of the area, eventually ending up in a displaced camp in Gikongoro.

In her recent trip to Rwanda, Monique sought out Antoine to persuade him to return with his people to Mbazi -- as someone who was well known to have behaved appropriately during the "events," she (and Antoine) felt there was nothing to fear in returning. Further, she thought he and his commune could serve as a model for others. She made necessary arrangements with UNAMIR and the local prefet to ensure no harm would come to him. He came back to Mbazi and was arrested a week later.

Since being taken into custody, Monique claims he has been tortured. Of equal concern to her is his condition as a diabetic -- she has no indication that the medication people have tried to get to him has actually reached him.

When she learned of his arrest, Monique spoke to the PM and to the Interior Minister, both of whom assured her that Antoine would get his job back. She was not able to see Kagame.

She has asked for our intervention.

Later this morning, I read Lionel Rosenblatt and Maria D'Albert's fax to Tim about the Garsony report: "rumors about findings are multiplying, without any clear facts," it states. Margaret McKelvey indicates the so-called UNHCR/GOR investigation consisted of a one-day trip to the Southeast. That's it.

To my mind, the GOR has not done sufficient work to clear up allegations about human rights abuses. Monique's story is one more brick in the wall of concern. I recommend that we use this particular incident as a conversation about how the GOR intends to attract people back, reconcile with those civil servants who did not participate in massacres, and still go forward with detaining those accountable for killings. This is a good example of the kind of challenge the GOR faces. Please let me know what you think. Pru

Distribution: GEM, JZS, AF/C

PS I forgot to advise Monique to get in touch with ICRC -- is there anything else I should say when I next speak to her at this end of this week or the beginning of next?

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